The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service sends news releases and editorial information of matters affecting labor received in the industrial, financial and political fields, and carries other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 29, 1915, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Accepted for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 12, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1692 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 37

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Even big business is fed up with the discredited Connally-Smith Labor Disputes Act. No other conclusion can be reached from a blistering editorial in "Business Week," a publication devoted to the interests of private industry.

Unlike some spokesmen for the National Association of Manufacturers, the editors of Business Week do not want to amend or "improve" the noxious law. They want it repealed outright.

"The interests of business will be best served," the editorial states, "by leaving the details of collective bargaining and personnel policy to its industrial relations experts. Both management and labor know what hazards inhere in further Government intervention of any sort."

With remarkable frankness, the magazine admits that "organized business and its allies in the House and Senate fought hard and long" for the enactment of the Connally-Smith Bill over the President's veto. The purpose of the bill, Business Week concedes, was to "divest organized labor of some of its power." But the results apparently have been disappointing to big business. For labor's bargaining strength has not been neutralized, strikes and labor disputes have been encouraged rather than prevented and even labor's political activities have been enlarged despite the prohibition in the law against direct campaign contributions by unions.

Keep The Government Out

We're glad to see that big business agrees with labor that the Connally-Smith Act is intolerable and should be repealed at once—albeit for different reasons.

Labor warned the country that this measure would cause trouble instead of preventing it but these admissions were published at the time.

The really significant portion of the Business Week editorial, however, discloses that intelligent business may be beginning to see eye to eye with organized labor. That is the statement that industrial relations experts know "what hazards inhere in further Government intervention of any sort."

That phrase is a tacit admission of the fact that any Government interference with the freedom of organized labor is bound to have a direct effect on the freedoms of industry. Labor long has emphasized that abridgement of the rights of workers constitutes a threat to the preservation of free enterprise. As we see it, the free enterprise system embraces freedom of opportunity for labor as well as capital. Weakening of the foundations of one of the supporting pillars endangers the whole structure.

The time has come for private industry to acknowledge this fact and to guard the rights of free labor in America just as jealously as organized labor seeks to protect the right of private industry to operate for profit and for the benefit of the community.

Industrial problems can best be solved by joint action of industry and labor through the processes of collective bargaining. When the Government steps into the picture it is dangerous for both sides.

Colorado Anti-Labor Law Nipped

Another interesting development in the past week was the decision of Judge Charles C. Sackman in Denver holding invalid the most vicious sections of Colorado's sane and untried labor-enslavement law. This Colorado statute is perhaps the worst of the dozen anti-labor Acts passed during the year by State Legislatures. All of them are now being challenged in the courts.

Judge Sackman's decision was not entirely favorable to labor because he upheld certain repressive features of the law, such as a ban on closed shop agreements, restrictions on picketing and a list of unfair labor practices by employes which, if committed, would subject workers and their unions to fines and civil damage suits.

For this reason the court ruling will be appealed by labor to the higher courts.

Nevertheless Judge Sackman did throw out several vicious sections of the law which call for compulsory incorporation of unions and seek to regulate in detail the legitimate affairs of labor.

Thus provisions were outlawed which sought to restrict the amount of dues and initiation fees unions may fix; to compel unions to open their books for public inspection; to prohibit certain forms of political activities; to require unions to elect officers annually; to permit the State Industrial Commission to send agents into union meetings for a check on proceedings, and to allow members who object to union decisions to apply either to the commission or the courts to override the majority vote of the union.

The law, as now constituted, is a threat to all but one of business unions which failed to comply with any of these myriad regulations.

The decision of Judge Sackman is a good start toward invalidating the entire law.

Kaiser Shipyard Workers Head List For Ideas Increasing Production

Washington, D. C.—Sixteen workers and ten supervisory employes whose ideas contributed to the amazing production records established by the Henry J. Kaiser shipyards in the Portland, Ore., area, made a clean sweep of national production honors announced here by War Production Drive Headquarters.

The Drive's Board for Individual Awards bestowed 12 Certificates and 14 Honorable Mentions for Production Ideas submitted through Labor-Management Committees of three yards. These committees include representatives of the Metal Trades Council, AFL, and of the Kaiser management, and have done valuable work in overcoming joint production problems. They give careful consideration to all suggestions for increasing and improving production and to the transmission of these ideas from one yard to another.

"Sound and practical results have convinced labor, management, and the public here of the success of the suggestions systems," said a report to Drive Headquarters on the activities of these committees.

Worth Philip Watts, machinist at the Oregon Shipbuilding Corp., won a Certificate for designing a new mount drill press which speeds drilling, does more accurate work, increases safety, and is adaptable to many operations. He also developed two devices for measuring the degree of pipe bends.

Sydney Owen Tuve, pipefitter leadman, was granted a Certificate for designing a die cutting machine which saves time, improves the production of rubber, composition and fabric gaskets.

John H. Collins, shipfitter, received a Certificate for devising a jig for burning batten clips.

A father and son team—Charles Brum and his son, William Frederick Brum—worked out a flange pipe table which saves space, increases efficiency and improves safety. They each received Honorable Mention.

Ivan Bardette Platt, a welder leadman, was given Honorable Mention for devising a plywood shield to protect the eyes, so that welders are now able to work safely in close quarters.

Ray Parcher, a burner, won Honorable Mention for designing a portable bevel cutter, with which an operator can cut four times the distance formerly covered by hand without changing position while making bevels in deck plates.

Two fitters at the Vancouver yards of the Kaiser chain, Dale Scott and John P. Sommer, won Honorable Mention for designing a deck puller for BB8 ships. Their device makes the flight deck fair to the transverse girders during welding operations and reduces the time required to do this work from 8,000 to 750 man-hours.

Gary H. Shields, material expediter leadman, won Honorable Mention for devising a small crane to lift ship materials which are too heavy for a man to lift and not heavy enough for a regular crane.

A woman-shipyard worker, Mrs. E. L. Norwood, received Honorable Mention for devising repair pliers which make repair jobs easier, quicker and safer.

Job Plan for School Youth Curbed

Washington, D. C.—Three Government agencies joined in a declaration against inclusion of school youth "in any employment plan until other sources of labor have been exhausted."

The declaration was part of a statement of policies and standards issued to guide urban communities in establishing part-time school and work programs.

Signed by Paul V. McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission; Katharine F. Lenroot, chief of the Children's Bureau of the Labor Department, and Dr. John W. Studebaker, Commissioner of Education, the statement said:

"The first obligation of school youth is to take advantage of their educational opportunities in order that they may be better prepared for citizenship and for service to the nation."

Workers Will Back The Attack!

Washington, D. C.—In a joint pledge to the Government, leaders of organized labor volunteered the full support of American workers for the Third War Loan Drive.

AFL Presidents William Green, CIO President Philip Murray and Thomas Cashen, head of the Railway Labor Executives Association, sent the following letter to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau:

"Winning the war is the biggest job facing Organized Labor. For we are convinced that the survival of a free labor movement depends upon it.

"At this moment when we are beginning to win the war, American labor knows that it can not let up, and it will not. We have made a good beginning on this biggest job of all and we will carry it through. Our Government proposes, in the greatest financial undertaking in history, the Third War Loan Drive, to borrow $14,000,000,000 from the people of the United States and their organizations other than banks. This loan must and will come from individual American citizens. Our sons and brothers and husbands and fellow union members are on the fighting fronts ready to give their lives for their country. The least we workers back home can do is to give them the best possible chance of coming home alive. For this purpose we must supply them with the arms, weapons and equipment American workers can build and American dollars can pay for.

"The American people have undertaken to 'Back the Attack with War Bonds.' The Treasury is asking every American to buy at least a $100 War Bond during the month of September. We are gladly offered to the Secretary of the Treasury the wholehearted support of our labor organizations for this Third War Loan Program."

Bowles Punctures Campaign Against Price Rollback Demanded By Labor

Washington, D.C.—Newspapers and the National Association of Manufacturers have been laying down a propaganda barrage against a rollback of prices, the claims that workers' earnings have more than caught up with living costs.

This campaign was punctured by Chester Bowles, Acting Administrator of the Office of Price Administration, Bowles admitted that basic hourly wage rates—the only true yardstick for comparing earnings with costs—have been so tightly frozen that they now lag substantially behind advancing living costs.

He assailed newspapers that distorted O. P. A. research figures on the weekly earnings of workers into an argument against a slash in prices. The N. A. M. has likewise distorted these figures as showing that "wages have been rising more rapidly than the cost of living."

The net earnings, Bowles said, reflect long overtime hours workers are putting in, which operates against maximum production.

"To attempt to freeze total weekly earnings would be disastrous," he declared. "It would be unfair because they cannot be expected to work harder, at higher skills and more hours per week for the same weekly pay.

"It would be disastrous because it would wreck the policy of getting maximum production from our strong manpower.

"Business men would object if, in the field of price control, their total earnings were frozen regardless of how many units of goods they produced and sold."

Only basic hourly rates provide a fair standard, Bowles contended. They have failed to keep abreast of sky-rocketing prices, he agreed. To restore parity, living costs will have to be reduced at least 4.5 per cent, and the O. P. A. is trying, he said, to "do everything possible" to bring this cut about. He gave no inkling as to how this will be done.

The 4.5 per cent figure is based on the Department of Labor's index, but even O. P. A. economists recently conceded the index doesn't reflect the real advance in prices caused by the black market, illegal increases and adulteration of quality.

To create genuine parity, prices would have to be shorn by more than 4.5 per cent, or wages raise would have to be raised to cover the difference.

Walling Punctures High Wages Myth; Millions Get Only 40 Cents An Hour

All the hullabaloo about high wages sounds pretty hollow alongside a shocking report just issued by L. Metcalfe Walling, administrator of the Wage and Hour Act.

Unbelievable as the figures seem, about 12,500,000 workers are employed in industries for which a minimum wage of 40 cents an hour was established last year, or for which applications for wage hikes are pending, Walling said.

Even after the 12,500,000 workers are given a guaranteed 40-cent minimum, Walling asserted, there will still be many workers in other fields being grossly underpaid.

"Despite a public impression that wartime wages are high," Walling emphasized, "the War Labor Board has deemed it necessary to allow employers, without specific permission, to raise rates to 40 cents an hour. This was done because the board was flooded with requests from employers and employes who had previously not been paying or receiving this much."

Walling recalled that employer members on committees named to consider wages in two large industries voted almost solidly against establishing rates as "as high as 40 cents an hour." The record indicate, Walling said, that lower rates were still being paid and that labor could still be obtained for less than 40 cents an hour.

The organized employers are fighting the 40-cent minimum, it was indicated, is that they know when once established the rate will "stand as a bulwark for both employed and unemployed workers alike. Effective wage slashing in the period of readjustment after the war when our soldiers come home." Widespread chiseling on wage rates was declared to be due to the inability of the Government to undertake proper enforcement because Congress had cut its inspection staff between a fourth and a fifth.

NAVY FILMS AVAILABLE FOR WAR WORKER GROUPS

Washington, D. C. — Three new short subject motion pictures, "December 7th," "The Life and Death of the Hornet," and "The Navy Flies On"—will be available in September for exhibition to workers in war plants and shipyards, Rear Admiral C. H. Woodward, U. S. N., Chief of the Navy Department's Industrial Incentive Division, has announced.

These films portray to the workers on the home front scenes from the actual combat scenes—their interdependence with the fighting men of the front on the firing line. The weapons and equipment produced by America's workers are shown in action against the enemy.

Labor groups desiring to see the films produced and distributed by this division should write to: Industrial Incentive Division, U. S. Navy 2118 Constitution Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C.

RAIL PATROLMEN SIGN UP BESSEMER AND LAKE ERIE

Washington, D. C.—Secretary-Treasurer R. H. Britton, Railway Patrolmen's Local Union No. 8, of Conneaut, Greenville, Pa., reported to AFL President William Green the provisions of the agreement negotiated by the local covering working conditions of the railway patrolmen employed by the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Co.

The agreement, effective Sept. 1, 1943, includes the eight-hour day; time and a half for overtime; a seniority agreement; vacation, sick leave, rainment, and one-half of the cost of the balance of uniform furnished by the carrier and all employes are required to wear same; 5-9-12-day vacation; traveling expenses when necessary.

UPHOLSTERERS' UNION CHANGES STRUCTURE

Philadelphia, Pa.—Sal B. Hoffmann, International president of the Upholsterers' International Union (AFL), has announced changes in the structure of the organization designed to enable the union to meet most effectively war time problems and anticipated post-war expansion.

Five industry departments—upholstered furniture, mattress and bedding, caskets, wood furniture, awning and canvas—have been set up, with each department controlling in its industry the establishment and maintenance of standard basic pay rates, hours of labor, working conditions, and economic policies. Such basic standards and policies, once adopted by a department, and approved by the AFL General Executive Board, must be complied with by all UIU locals in the respective industry covered by that department.

The departments also will pass on all contracts between locals and employers, and on all applications for the right to use the union label.

Fall Of Italy Hailed By Labor; AFL To Rush Relief To People

Allies Free Labor In Sicily

Washington, D. C. — The Allied military Government has proclaimed a free labor movement in Sicily and has freed all labor organizations in that recently conquered island.

Italian workers will have as much freedom as American or British labor, subject temporarily to military restrictions. All of the rights taken away from the workers more than 20 years ago will be restored, the War Department reports.

Working for Captain David Morse, the AMG labor program was put into effect Sept. 4, following the abolition of the Fascist labor organizations. The program provides for a civilian director of labor in each province. The director's office will establish employment offices, vocational training and wage and cost-of-living studies.

Workers will choose their own delegates to represent them in an office of conciliation, mediation and arbitration. In the event that this office is unable to come to agreement, the provincial director will appoint impartial arbitrators.

During the military occupations, it will be illegal to have any strikes or lockouts would be permitted.

Until the provincial labor offices are able to complete investigations of the existing contracts between employers and employes, the provisions covering wages, hours and working conditions will be continued in the interest of stability.

AMG is now studying the labor picture in each province to relieve painfully low wages the workers received. Agricultural workers, it was said, received from 1 to 3 lira a day (1 to 2 cents) plus enough food to keep alive.

The new plan, it was reported, was set up after consultation with the old labor leaders, including representatives of all of the liberal political groups. It makes possible the reorganization of the syndical movement, basis of the Italian labor movement before Mussolini's Fascists abolished the trade unions.

Green, Antonini And Woll Support Move To Restore Italian Labor

Washington, D. C.—Organized labor hailed Italy's unconditional surrender as "the beginning of the collapse of the Axis" and moved quickly to bring about the emancipation and rehabilitation of the Italian people.

AFL President Green greeted Gen. Eisenhower's announcement of the armistice with the following statement:

"Italy's surrender marks the beginning of the collapse of the Axis. It should be clear now—even to the Nazis—that their end is inevitable. Further resistance will cause only needless slaughter.

"Because we know that victory in the war in Europe is almost in sight, the workers of America must not relax their efforts for a single instant. It is up to us now to redouble the intensity of the production drive so that we can hasten the final victory. Cheered and encouraged by the good news, the workers of America will set to work with renewed energy to finish the job.

"The Italian people have not lost by the unconditional surrender of their country. They have gained. They have won freedom from the yoke of Fascism and the opportunity to govern themselves in the future in a free and democratic country. Nothing the United Nations can do would be more effective in alienating the German people from Hitler and his Nazi crew than merciful and considerate treatment of the people of Italy."

President Green's position was upheld by Luigi Antonini, president of the Italian-American Labor Council. He said:

"It was the masses of the Italian workers that forced the existing regime in Italy to end the unequal war on behalf of Germany and to accept terms of unconditional surrender offered by Great Britain and the United States.

"The armies of a conquered people cannot be applied to the Italian masses who are and always have been on the side of the United Nations.

"We are confident that the Italian people, once they are fully afforded the opportunity of deciding their own fate, will determine a democratic solution for all Italian problems. Any future settlement with representatives of the Italian people must be made in accord with the spirit and letter of the Atlantic Charter. The birth of the rebirth of democracy in Italy will be a free Italian labor movement and we of the Italian-American Labor Council pledge ourselves to do everything in power to support it and to contribute to the rehabilitation of a free Italy."

A fund of $250,000 is to be raised by the Italian-American Labor Council which will present itself to the conventions in a drive to help the rebuilding of free trade unions in Sicily and other Italian territory liberated from the Axis yoke.

The drive will be launched at a Columbus Day celebration to be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York City, October 12, which will be addressed by outstanding leaders of the American and British trade union movements and a highly authoritative spokesman of American foreign policy.

Meanwhile, Vice President Matthew Woll, of the AFL, urged that quantities of food, clothing and supplies be sent to the Italian people "on behalf of the 6,200,000 members of the American Federation of Labor." He said:

"There is a need to transmit to the people of Italy the conviction that there is still a feeling of brotherhood and friendship linking the American labor movement and the harrassed, distressed, freedom-loving people who have suffered so much at the hands of the Fascist oppressors.

"Supplies should be sent through the Labor League for Human Rights, which has offices in Rome as soon as the military situation allows."

LEATHER WORKERS CHOOSE LADIES' HANDBAG UNION

New York, N. Y.—Samuel Rumbin, president of the International Ladies' Handbag, Luggage, Belt & Novelty Workers' Union, AFL, announced that his union won an overwhelming victory in an election held to select a collective bargaining representative at the plants of the Sara Leather Products Co., 1550 Broadway, Arrow Art Mfg. Co., New York, New Jersey. In the poll, taken under the direction of the National Labor Relations Board, the vote was nearly 3 to 1 in favor of the union. The company employs more than 200 workers.

LABOR'S POST-WAR ROLE VISIONED AS IMPORTANT

Boston, Mass.—American labor "will be an important factor in determining the shape of things to come" after the Allies have achieved final victory, Ralph A. Bard, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, told workers and officials of the Boston Navy Yard here during ceremonies surrounding the award of the third star to the yard's Army-Navy "E" pennant.

"In America, labor is more than fulfilling its role—not under compulsion, but voluntarily and with an open will," Bard said. "Labor has made great contributions to the war effort and has maintained at home and fighting standards on foreign fronts."

6,500,000 Housing Jobs Discovered In AFL Post-War Job Hunt Program

Washington, D. C.—Launching a nationwide job hunt on its own "Labor For Victory" radio program, the American Federation of Labor discovered that with proper planning there can be created 6,500,000 new jobs through a sound, post-war housing program and millions more in other construction.

Vice President Harry C. Bates, chairman of the AFL Building Committee, proposed a ten-year home building program to proceed at a rate of a million to a million-and-a-half units a year in order to provide decent housing for the American people.

This program, he said, would give jobs to two and a half million workers directly in the construction trades and four million others in related industries.

"The important thing," he said, "is that there come in America and in which the consumer demand for service is answered. By building more homes, we will create new demand not only for such equipment as refrigerators, kitchen ranges and vacuum cleaners, but also for furniture, furnishings and even textiles. This, revival of the construction industry will stimulate the whole range of industrial activity which must be geared up to provide real jobs for demobilized soldiers and war workers."

Speaking for construction industry, Peter W. Eller, vice president of the Thompson-Starrett Co., Inc., indicated that millions of additional jobs would be created by post-war construction of hotels, dams, tunnels, roads, airports and new factories. He urged city, State and Federal authorities to line up such projects for a quick start when the war ends.

Asked what the Government's policy should be with respect to such a program, Eller insisted that steps be taken to avoid "another WPA or something like it after the war is over."

"The Government should decide at once," he said, "that post-war construction and public works projects should be carried on by private construction firms now in the field and by trained and experienced union labor under established working conditions. They built the camps, factories, airports and shipyards for the war effort. They did a good job and they can repeat in the post-war program."

Asked whether labor and industry in the construction field could cooperate on an efficient basis to handle the many big jobs that will come along with peace, Eller said:

"The answer to that is an emphatic 'yes.' Labor and industry in the construction field understand each other and are more than willing to cooperate on the best terms. All we're looking for is a chance to work and we are confident that such an opportunity will present itself when the war ends and America begins to have a better and more prosperous future."

Another job hunt program will be broadcast by Bill Dunker with AFL President William Green and Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, participating.

Watt Blasts As Wholly Unwarranted NLRB Ruling In Morenci Mine Case

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board announced that it will not reconsider its recent decision to nullify decisions of the National Labor Relations Board, since to do so would nullify an act of Congress.

The statement was made by Robert L. Morse, public member, in a case in which the board unanimously refused to take jurisdiction of a dispute between the United Steelworkers of the Phelps Dodge Corp. and the Clifton-Morenci Mines, Inc., Morenci, Ariz. The dispute arose over the certification by the NLRB of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, CIO, as the exclusive bargaining agent for the approximately 1,400 employes of the mine.

Although concurring in the WLB decision, Robert J. Watt, AFL representative, issued a "withering" blast against the findings of the National Labor Relations Board in the case. He said:

"In this case the National Labor Relations Board decided that the few men who operate $100 worth of machines, or a hundred hundred unskilled laborers who operate $1.00 shovels, the typewriter, Painters, Plasterers, Bricklayers, Plumbers, Teamsters, Electrical Workers, Operating Engineers and other trades and crafts must be lumped into a polyglot unit in which the unskilled workers would by sheer numbers have a majority.

"On the other hand, the National Labor Relations Board decided that the local railroad employes, could have their own units, and that watchmen and technical supervisory help should be outside the polyglot unit. In other words, the National Labor Relations Board determined for a few groups of employes while ordering all others to consider themselves by fiat one happy family.

"The skilled workers showed their unfitness for this finding and refused to participate in the vote. In normal times the finding would be a farce and the election would result in a strike or quit. The mines could not be closed by the unlawful action of the Labor Relations Board and must continue to operate. The miners would necessarily be subjected to the domination of designing or skilled craftsmen who have shown their unfitness to be representatives for collective bargaining.

"The responsibility of the National War Labor Board to maintain uninterrupted production is only a part of governmental policy which should guide the decisions of other governmental agencies while here are rule in labor relations. I find it difficult to discern any evidence of such consideration in the finding of the National Labor Relations Board in this case.

"I have found no explanation as to why the National Labor Relations Board should have ignored its own standards, and the obvious preference of skilled craftsmen for craft representation. This and not this National Labor Relations Board took this course for the purpose of expediting while the destruction of craft unions they are perpetrating an ideological excursion which is inexcusable during a national emergency in a nation at war. I regret that the members of the National Labor Relations Board will not use the same persons for jurisdictional standards which prompts the employes of the National War Labor Board to refuse to cooperate."